

The Virtual Arts and Life Magazine

rez

may 2017

The Stiletto Gang
as told by Amy Inawe

Moonlight Prince
by Dubhna Rhiadra

Footfalls Echo:
7. Talking
by Drover Mahogany

The Body
by Cat Boccaccio

The Anthropic Principle
presented by Art Blue

POETRY:

I AM AVERAGE
by Average Resident

Juliesse/Trilling/Zecca/Firebrand

CONTENTS

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- **Moonlight Prince** Dubhna Rhiadra spins a tale for the ages, in two parts, and brings her exquisite dreams to life.
- **The Stiletto Gang** If you really want to know where the cools kids party, Amy Inawe takes us right there.
- **A Dream Play** Jullianna Juliesse treats us once again to a thoughtful poem that reminds us what it's like being human.
- **Landscape** From the surface to the depths and back again. Mariner Trilling explores them both, finding beautiful commonalities.
- **I Am Average** Average resident doesn't come up short.
- **The Body** Cat Boccaccio leaves us interrupted, with a crisp dystopian peek into a terrifyingly personal moment.
- **The Anthropic Principle** Art Blue takes us behind the scenes at the new LEA offering of our friend, Gem Preiz.
- **Pretty Pictures** Mario Zecca draws pretty pictures but wistfully pulls the curtain back in his starkly beautiful poem.
- **Footfalls Echo: Talking** Drover Mahogany walks every day along his wooded path and, fortunately, takes us along with him.
- **The One That Declined to Get Away** The metaphor might have broken down, but not Flynt Firebrand's insightful view.

About the Cover:

Cat Boccaccio grabbed this audacious image of femininity, allure, danger and sex: the stiletto. Cat's keen eye captures more than a shoe; she captures a mood, in this case Amy Inaway's crazy "The Stiletto Gang." A seal of approval to be sure.



SNOW CRASH

by Neal Stephenson
celebrating 25 years of the novel

with on the road readings
in High Fidelity, Second Life (LEA28) and
open Metaverse grids

Six readings and discussions
Duration each 1 hour
Starting: May 2017

Arranged by
Art Blue and Delightful Doowangle

Readings by
Philip Rosedale (HF)
Molly Bloom (SL)
Jami Mills (SL)
Juliette Surrealdreaming (open metaverse)
Holly Moon (open metaverse, HF)


Locations and timetable on
notecard inworld, on facebook and at
<http://sc.2rez.com>

FIRST CHAPTER „THE DELIVERATOR“
READING IN HIGHFIDELITY
BY PHILIP ROSEDALE



Philip Rosedale:

“Snow Crash certainly painted a compelling picture of what such a virtual world could look like in the near future, and I found that inspiring.”



saturdays 7:30 pm slt
at veritas

132/124/2492

m u s e
h o u s e





RAINE



AFTER DARK

— LOUNGE —

on Idle Rogue



contact: Meegan Danitz
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PENNY DREADFUL

AN EVENING OF DANCE

AT WHITECHAPEL

VICTORIAN LONDON LEA 10

SUNDAY MAY 7, 2017 7PM

The background image is a dimly lit Victorian library. It features tall, dark wood bookshelves filled with books. In the center, there is a fireplace with a warm glow emanating from it. Above the fireplace hangs a small, framed painting. The floor is made of dark wood, and several chairs with red upholstered seats are visible in the foreground. The overall atmosphere is cozy and scholarly.

TERPSICORPS
ARTWORKS

POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION EDITED BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT ONE · PENNY



ADDITIONAL SHOWS THROUGH JUNE
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK FOR DETAILS

Each month this year we are including one of the months from Molly Bloom's 2017 calendar, which was produced by Art Blue, with the help of Jami Mills. Art has sent copies of this wonderful example of immersive art to many well-respected museums around the world in his single-handed effort to preserve the finest examples of early immersive art, before they are lost forever.

Molly Bloom 2017
The Queen is Not Amused



art direction/photography: jami mills
production: art blue



“With hurricane force, Molly literally transports us...into a world of her own making. “Blown Away” gives a nod to Mary Poppins, but still makes this scene all her own.”

May

blown away



Blown away by watching the machinima at:

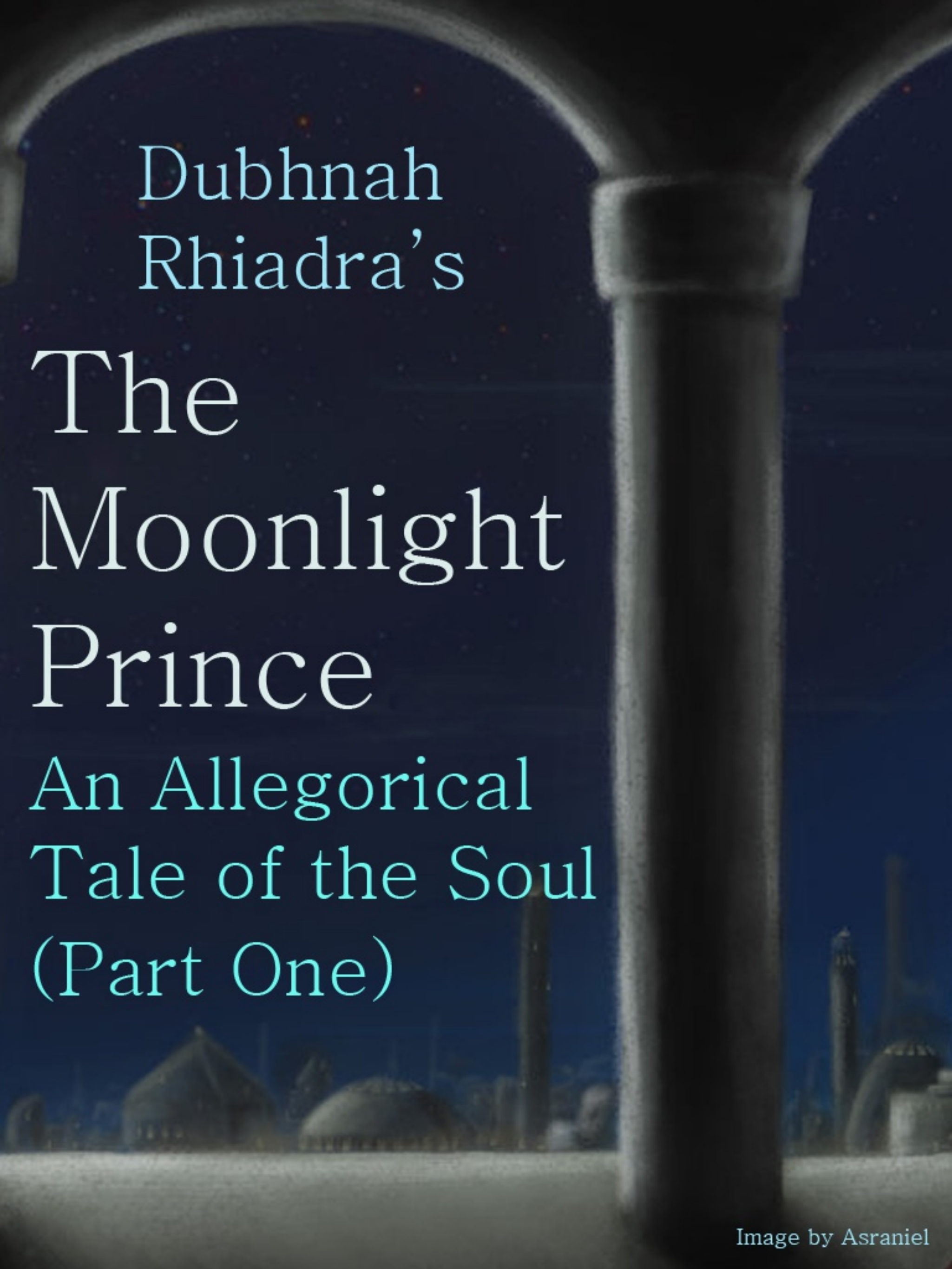
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201705.
immersivia.com







Dubhnah
Rhiadra's

The Moonlight Prince

An Allegorical
Tale of the Soul
(Part One)

Once there was a prince who had a curse on him that he could never walk in daylight. He built a wonderful Kingdom full of beauty and grace and he was known as the Moonlight Prince. His people served him gladly because he was just and kind. In spite of the curse, his life seemed to lack for nothing.

But one night as he walked the ramparts of his starlight castle and looked out at the shadowed land around him, his heart was heavy. The breeze brought a beautiful scent to him of cedar forests and night-blooming flowers, of sage and seawrack; soft music wafted up to his ears from the ballroom below and laughter of happy people. All this had sufficed him before but now ... he longed for something more, something different. He realized he wanted to see the daylight, somehow to lift the curse that was upon him.

There was a woman of the fairy kind, Daystar, a creature of the untamed woods, who spoke to trees and wild creatures who dwelt in the forests. She danced the wild dances of the fae folk and walked where she willed, knowing nothing of humankind, nor caring.

But one night she wandered close to a human place, she saw a castle that glimmered in the starlight, and on its ramparts a Prince walked. She passed

by, following the owl that flitted through the shade-heavy trees, but then she felt a tug. She stopped and cast her senses round, seeking the source of this tug.

She sought first of the spider kind who hung their webs across the trees, but they did not answer her, only spun their sticky threads across the paths where Daystar walked. So she asked of the moths that flew past, drawn by the light in the human castle, but they answered not, only saying "The Light! The Light!" Still Daystar felt the tug so she went to the lake and asked the frogs that sang their songs for their mates, and they could not answer her, only sing "Love! Love!" over and over.

So she took a sticky web in her hand and followed the Light that drew the moths, and looked to see where "Love! Love!" might be, but saw only the human man on the walls of the castle. She held the web in her hands, but felt she was the one being drawn in by a string to the human man's arms.

As he walked, suddenly she was there, landing lightly on the balcony, glimmering in the moonlight. Her raiment was the blue of a bright summer's day and her scent of grassy meadows hot under the noon sun, her eyes were limpid like the sun-dappled depths of a woodland stream, and they gazed into the eyes of the Moonlight

Prince, and he gazed back.

But she had never cared for any of the humankind and did not like to be seen so by this man, to feel this tug at her soul. Their eyes met and a spider-thread of connection was thrown between them, but she would have none of this and she fled.

The Moonlight Prince was shocked too by this sudden intrusion into his reverie. It was as if the Daylight he so craved had taken on a body and stood before him. In that fleeting moment, he fell in love. The spider thread tucked itself in behind his breastbone and lodged there. So when Daystar fled, he pursued. He could see the glimmer of her flitting through the woods, his human body could not jump down from the ramparts but he noted the path she took, and ran down through his castle, causing consternation amongst his guests and a flurry amongst his servants.

He ran out of the castle and followed the trail through the woods. He brushed cobwebs from his face, and disturbed moths in their headlong flight to the light; he heard frogs croaking of Love! Love! as he

squelched through the marshy edges of the lake.

And as she fled, she heard his heavy human feet following her and she wondered what it would be like if she stopped and met him instead of fleeing. What if she could take an interest in humankind, what if she could change? And so she stopped and the Prince came to her in a hidden place in the heart of the forest, an ancient ruin



long since forgotten and overgrown by the wildwood, a place the Prince had never known existed until now. Now their hands and lips and bodies met, each tasting the newness of that moment, only caring for the insistent cry of Love! Love! as it

echoed around them.

Then the eastern sky began to glimmer grey, and then blush. The Prince needs must flee but he stayed. Nothing could harm him in this charmed place. And indeed the sun rose high in the sky and cast its rays into the heart of that protected place and still they lay in each other's arms. Her kin came and fluttered about her, marveling that she, of all of them, had taken a human lover. She answered, whispering to them as he slept at her side and said:

*“He called and I came, in spite of
myself.
My feet led past half-glimpsed vistas of
dread.*

*I thought we would take one step at a
time
A cautious tango, step and hold before
the next*

*A sidelong, parallel spiral
Edging around the fearful abyss
Glancing askance, eyelashes demure
While my flesh clamoured to his.*

*Instead
Head up and heels clicking smartly
On the worn winter slabs*

*I stepped cleanly, surely
To that sheltered hollow
In the centre of his love.*

*And it's too early, too soon
Too late to retreat
I stand, level-eyed
In my place
And quaking, I wait.”*

*And the fae folk fluttered and thrilled
to her words, for they loved Love.*

*But the curse had held its power and
she realized as he lay sleeping at her
side, that he slept and would not
waken.*



And so she left him lying there, but now she found she could not fly. Her body was heavy and opaque and her wings had no power. Her feet scraped along the ground as she flapped her wings, and so she walked - - human like - - her wings dragging in the mud behind her.

The Prince's people came and found him lying bound in sleep in a strange ruined courtyard covered in forest leaves, and carried him home. There he lay, under his curse 'til some way could be found to break it.

Knowing nothing, Daystar left, making her way in the world. She could not return to her own people, the enchantments that separated their world from the human one now excluded her without her wings to carry her through.

So she walked in the human world. At first she hobbled, feet sore and shoulders slumped under the weight of fleshly life. But even in that state she saw the beauty of the world around her. And as she walked she passed human homes, saw them working in their fields, carrying their children, playing, loving, quarrelling and making up, mourning their dead with tears, and she realized all this had been unknown to her in her fairy world. Even at the gravesides, she could see the hearts in these strange human

creatures, the threads of connection they felt for each other that went even beyond death. She began to see that in her wildness and ecstasy, she had never known love ... and now she did. She had always wondered at those of her kind who had fretted and sighed after the human men and women, now she was one of them.

As she walked on her way through the harvested fields under the winter sun, she saw a man who sat by the roadside, his staff beside him and a dish in front of him. As she watched, a human woman walked by and put food into his dish. The woman left and he turned to look at Daystar, and invited her to join him in his meal. Until that moment, Daystar had not known her human body would hunger, she had only fed for pleasure at the taste before, sipping at the nectar like the bees, but now she accepted this small portion eagerly and felt her body grow stronger for the eating of it. She looked gratefully at the man, who smiled calmly at her, as he too ate his share. They did not speak at first, but his eyes took in the bedraggled wings as she sat with her chin on her knees watching the clouds of the sky and the small birds as they hopped in the hedges. Then she asked him if this was the human way - - to put out a dish and wait for food. She had not known this could happen. He spoke to her then of universal love, that it was limitless in

what it could bring, and smiled a serene smile.

He said, “Your kind already know life beyond the veil of Maya, I too seek to make that veil transparent through non-attachment, I can teach you nothing that you don’t already know. “

But she said, “I seek what you are trying to leave behind. Your material existence is thrilling and beautiful to me. My body, though heavy and flightless, feels things it cannot feel on the Other Side.”

He only smiled and said, “Go then and love. You have so much to give. Pour it out.”

And so she left him and continued on her way with renewed confidence. She smiled at the men and women who walked by her, trudging to their work, but they looked back oddly at her and some stared maliciously, sniggering at her or even spitting as she passed. Human children looked back at her with unclouded eyes, but their parents drew them away from her when they saw her eyes on them. She wondered at their ways but did not know she might be in danger.

But she decided to leave the township anyway and the staring eyes.

A storm gathered, the rain began to fall

and the wind blew. It grew dark too and Daystar was out in the open countryside again. She struggled through the cold and whipping wind, her clothes were being torn from her and her teeth chattered. She had always ridden the winds before, but now her body ached and would not stand upright. Finally she had to crawl. She followed a stone wall towards some trees, looking for shelter. There! Did she see a light glimmer? Yes! There in amongst the trees on the rise was a small home with a soft light glowing through a gap in the curtains on the window. Daystar struggled towards it and pulled herself up some steps to the door. It opened as she lay there, almost unconscious, and she felt herself being lifted inside to warmth and soft light.

When she came to, she was dry and warm, wrapped in a blanket by a small stove. A dark-haired woman put warm food to her lips and she ate. Then she slept. She had never felt tired before, only sleeping when she wanted to dream, to amuse herself or to keep a hibernating creature company through the winter. Now her very bones ached and her sleep was deep and dreamless.

She woke in the daylight, sunshine streamed through the open top of the door of the curious little house she had found. She rose and looked outside, realizing at last that she was in a caravan, painted in bright colours on

the outside. A shaggy pony grazed nearby and the raven-haired woman who had tended her the night before sat by a fire outside, smoking a pipe.

Daystar came and sat by the fire and Raven Woman pulled out her cards and asked Daystar to take one. The card she pulled had a strange picture on it. It

showed a winged woman captured in a bubble in the sky, her wings detached about a metre behind her. Wrapped round the bubble was barbed wire. Inside the bubble there was a summer sky. Outside the bubble, one side of the sky was day the other was a dark blue starry night. Raven Woman looked at her and said "This card shows you now, cut off from your natural powers. Your wings will not serve you now in the world where you have found yourself. You will have to learn to hide them and find other ways to move around."



Daystar bowed her head, knowing this already.

"How is it that you had this card that looks like me?" she asked Raven Woman.

So Raven Woman showed her the whole deck and over the days that Daystar spent with her she saw Raven Woman tell the fortunes of many human people who came out to ask her;

she saw how the cards fell in patterns that told stories and the people went away resolved or sad or pleased at what they had been told. She even saw her own card come up for one man who looked sad and beaten and lost. Raven Woman taught her many human skills, to feed herself, make fire, wash, clothe herself warmly in a long wool coat, and to watch out for danger from humans. Daystar learned this because Raven Woman was herself sometimes in danger from the people of the villages because she lived apart from them and was different.

While they travelled, they heard tell of the Moonlight Prince's fall into a deep sleep, of how he was kept in his castle unable to be woken, and that in his absence his lands had been taken from him by the Ice Queen. When she heard these tales, Daystar trembled and she told Raven Woman of how she had come to be caught in human form.

Raven Woman said "Your paths are linked now, yours and the Prince's. The Ice Queen was the one who cursed him many years ago; she has a hold on him now and you must find your way through this world to what will free you and him both."

Daystar said "But how will I know what to do? I don't know anything of these matters! I know nothing of this love that humans set such store by!"

"Then you must learn of it, as a human woman. I have taught you all I can, now you must make your own way."

So Daystar walked on her way, gathering her long woolen coat about her against the chill, hiding her wings. She came to a human city and walked its streets. She heard a man speaking out loud to a big crowd of people, they all listened to him as he spoke with great passion. She didn't understand what he spoke of - - it concerned human affairs of which she had no way of understanding - - but she admired his fire and smiled up at him with gleaming

eyes. She did not notice that many of the women in that crowd looked at him in the same way and that he glared sternly at them and averted his eyes from them. When the crowd left, as she had nothing better to do, she lingered. And he fixed her with a deep gaze and seemed to decide something, because he called her over to him. She went back to his rooms with him, in a big building where he worked and lived with many others. He questioned her and seemed amused by her answers, but told her she must stay and he would teach her many things.

So Daystar stayed with this man, innocently offering herself to him body and soul. And he taught her many things, by making rules for every moment of her day so she would know how to behave. He seemed not to notice her wings, even as they lay naked side by side; perhaps it was because even as he took her he did not look at her, averting his gaze from her beauty even as he released his passion upon her.

Every day he would go and speak out loud to the people, and they became angry at his words and often would fight amongst themselves. The fighting grew fierce and he grew in power. She realised he was speaking of the Moonlight Prince, that he slept and left his people unprotected, that others should take over his rule, who cared more for the people he had neglected. Her heart was full at his words, and she

wondered if this was the way she would make amends for what she had brought upon the Moonlight Prince, to help govern his lands while he slept.

But the man took over the power, and it did not seem he did so for love of the Prince or the People. He made more and more rules, for everyone, he sent armoured men out in groups to enforce the rules, people were afraid of him and the streets were empty, especially of women who hid from the soldiers. Every now and then word would come of the Ice Queen, processing through the lands, but she was distant, and the Rule Giver was close.

He controlled Daystar within his home as he controlled his people in the City. She who was naturally graceful and nimble-fingered, grew clumsy and inept under his constant harsh scrutiny. She could not keep up with his demands and ran from one thing to another, leaving them unfinished only to be punished harshly for her failings in so doing. In spite of the beatings and scathing words, she walked at his side when he went out among the people, her beauty drawing their admiration even as they too quailed under his arbitrary rule. But she saw the love they used to have for him turn to resignation, as they grew pale and hungry under the burden of his rules that stopped them even feeding themselves, while others who controlled the markets and produce stayed fat and gloating. She understood now how much these things mattered to them

with their fleshy bodies, she too hungered for the food and the warmth of the fire.

So it was that when she saw a man grimace in hate and reach inside his coat and make a sudden rush towards her lover, the Rule Maker, she did not see why she should say anything, warn him, instead she let the man push past her and stab his knife into the Rule Maker's chest, and stood there, frozen, while he lay on the floor and his blood gushed out and pooled beside him. She was pushed aside in the surging crowd, deafened by the shouting, and fell down, to be trampled under their frantic feet.

But in falling, she rolled into a niche, and curled up her small body behind a statue that had been placed there by the Moonlight Prince many years before. She saw a break in the stonework behind the statue and squeezed through and was away. She did not know that the people hunted her, hating her as they had hated her master, but she had seen enough to know that love could turn to hatred, that humans will strike back cruelly against cruelty, and that strength which seemed so reassuring and protective can turn harsh and controlling.

....to be continued....

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SKINNY PO BEACH

COUPLES & SINGLES

ADULTS ONLY

AS



WIDER RESORT PLAYGROUND





The Stiletto Gan

By Amy

gg

Inawe (SJW)

"What club are we hitting tonight?"

"Diamond, downtown. It's supposed

I felt my phone vibrate at just past one late on a Sunday night. I saw who it was and smiled. The text said simply *"do you want in?"*.

"Into what?"

"A party."

I did not hesitate. *"Yes"* I replied.

"Meet us in the big parking garage at Vaughn and Sixth Street in a half an hour."

I pulled into the parkade ascending the ramps through floor after empty floor until I came onto a small enclave of cars and a group of breathtaking women. I pulled in, parked then approached the small crowd. I recognized my acquaintance, *L*, but stayed quiet beyond a greeting. I stood on the periphery and watched, waiting to see what would happen next.

"Everyone ready?" *L* asked. There was a general murmur of accord. She nodded and then led the way.

We moved as a group through the garage and then halfway down the deserted block. We paused before the

darkened front entrance of some nightclub I had never heard of before. A few seemingly preordained members of the group started to scan the street. I could hear a distant siren that faded then disappeared. I turned to see what *L* was up to.

She was at the door with her back to us, bent over a bit. Within a moment she looked up and beamed. The door opened and she disappeared into the darkness. Everyone followed, me trailing.

Within a couple of moments *L* reappeared. *"The alarm is disabled. We are good to go."* Everyone cheered.

d to be good. It has a stiletto."

The women spread out as if they were performing a well choreographed routine. Suddenly the lights came on and music blared from the sound system. Someone handed me a flute of champagne. Fog rose as if from the LED dance floor, impaled by lasers punctuating the rhythm. The place was visually stunning and pristine. I saw the plastic on the bench seats and noticed some tools in the corner and realized we were inaugurating the club and grinned.

Dancing seemed to overtake us as if it were contagious, carried by the pounding beat. I felt alive. We danced until dawn threatened.

As we were preparing to leave *L* raised her hand until all conversation subsided. "So ladies? Do we approve?" There was a loud roar of assent.

L turned to me. "May I have your shoe please?" she asked. I raised my eyebrow for a brief heartbeat before

bending and retrieving it, handing it to her without a word.

She took it from me. She pulled a tube of super glue from her bag and applied some to the sole and heel of my shoe. *L* stood the stiletto upon the bar's exquisite countertop pressing down firmly. Then she released it, leaving it behind as we exited the building.

The club owner was flustered, muttering. "How did they get in? Shit, it is probably not worth the insurance deductible to refinish the bar."

The cop closed his notebook and explained patiently; "Leave it like it is. It is good luck. The Stiletto Gang only leaves a souvenir when they are impressed."

. r — e — z .

Oh, Daughter of Indra—
Descended to Earth,
Through Daddy's clouds and thunder.
His lightning shreds the anthracite sky,
And you fall,
You fall.

You want to know what it's like
To be human—
Feet sunk in clay,
The mud and blood, the failing flesh.

Why is it so hard to breathe?

You have left the second world and entered a third.
Bright chrysanthemum,
Hating the filth, pushing to the light,
Only to bloom and die.

Wrapped in your shawl,
Absorbing the world's pain—
My child, the rough wool will never be big enough.

The silver thread is snapped.
You are earthbound.

Then you know what poetry is.
Then you know what dreams are.
Then you know what it means to love.

Dreams are always better than reality.
The struggle between the torment of pleasure,
And the suffering that brings release.

Oh, daughter of the rain,
Do you return to the clouds unscathed?

A Dream Play



fractal by kseniya-omega

Jullianna Juliesse

Landscape

Mariner Trilling

The surface of the ocean forms a soft, featureless
horizon on a calm day.

Concealed below is a flurry of darting fish,
lumbering sea turtles and drifting jellies.

Yet the sailors above and the life below
have no capacity to sense the landscape's true nature.

Reality is a sheer cliff rising higher than
anything known to water
soaring far above the reach of ocean.

Reality is a sheer cliff plunging deeper than
anything known to land
plummeting beyond the reach of sunlight.

With the warm sun left behind,
the cliff continues its vertical fall to
a place miles below in the freezing dark.

Under the crushing pressure far below,
the bottom of the ocean forms a soft, featureless
horizon on a calm day.



I Am Average
by average Resident



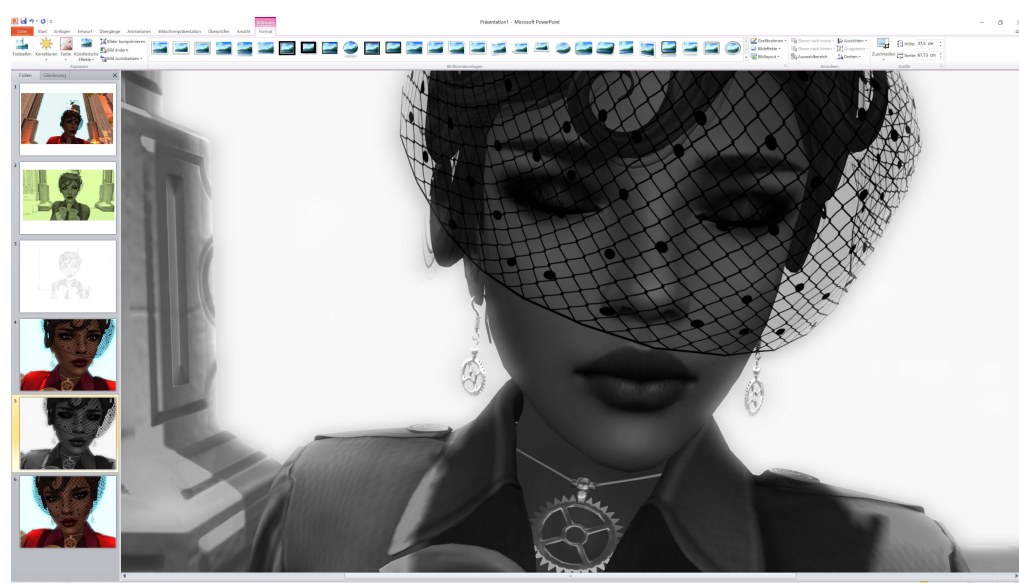
I wonder why I am so average, so boring average in this world. I am not bad looking at all, but I can't compete with the ones I want to be. It happened already at school times. For the cheerleaders you ask or for the baseball team? I was accepted as a backup. I think that's quite average, as many don't even make it to be a backup.

I can't believe that I have been sitting in the big reading room selecting carefully my future life, moving, paging in the slides, selecting my role, combining my strength and weaknesses and now as I am here, all is just average. Of course I have forgotten, that's the deal of life.

I am a reader. Maybe that's a bit outside of being average. I read a lot, but who notices, who cares? I stay average. My partner, you get it already, is also just average and I literally mean it, in all ways! You understand? Maybe I deserve nothing better, nothing else. If he would be mean, yeah I work my story now out by slipping into the female form, "the superior gender" - as Art Blue posted in his death performance *Code64 in Space*, when he got reborn by the code that was stored in pictures of raindrops. A blogger, apmel, reposted it under "A superior gender and other wonders with Art," so I am, based on Art Blue's words, not average, I am superior

average. But this superior average brings me no change. Life is still boring. I said when he would be mean, at least mean to me, a cheater, a whatever comes up now in your mind, then my heartbeat might get the hot tunes. No, he just cares for me, he is the average ways.

Others say that I am lucky when they report on what they experience. I am jealous of them, even when they cry bitterly and wish their partner to hell. I am average - forget the toggle "superior" before to add, it makes things even worse.



Change

It is time for a change. A second life. I buy a computer, one for me alone. I hide it. I create an avatar. I meet someone and it was not the usual "hi babe, how are you? - I am fine, thank you." It is a wow. A wow, wow, wow. I discover out of being average that I have potential in the arts. Rosalite

Gallery, Blue Windlight, No noob Gallery, all the top of the top asking me. I will step out to the light, out of the shadow. Right now!

Schulberg Gallery will do a Grand Opening for me! The gallery where Lana Newstrom was born! You are speechless? What else! No? Not speechless? You know the invisible art of Lana? She presented nothing; all was just in the perception of seeing something where nothing was. She was presented! Paul Rounney, the New York based curator and owner of the Gallery located at 349 5th Avenue, New York, presented her and collectors paid millions. Not millions for one piece, but \$80,000 USD. Just multiply it with endless pieces of art you can imagine! It was all over the news.

I will make the coup. I call my art “average art” and you will see my potential. I make screenshots of myself, the standard body will do. I give it to Power Point, let the effects click, a rain effect might be good, or tears, or the hottest of them all, “the tears in rain.” The art critics will fall in awe of the hidden messages. They will step close, take their lenses, let their AIs run on my art to see fingerprints where there are none and up we go. A new Art Warhol is born, but they are too average to see the wormhole in me.

You say that I am not average, way

beyond average. I am Art Blue.

Don't you see I changed my display name to average Resident? I am the genderless art machine.

I am average.

* * *

In one week I will change my display name again. I am still average, but my name, not.

* * *

The week is over ...

rez Magazine proudly presents exclusively the pictures of Art Warhol.



Editor's Note: This is a chapter out of the book "The Gods of Informatics and the Great Wheel" by Ervare, published by Universal Gazette 2017, available via leanpub.com (web download), Amazon (print and kindle), and your local bookstore.

· r — e — z ·



The Body Cat Boccaccio



Tall grasses and weeds had been replaced by creeping ivies and thyme, so the orderly row of houses looked as if their front gardens had been recently tended. It looked almost normal, except for the empty silence.

This was Chandler's Folly, the purpose-built town with the perfect stone churches, the manicured playgrounds, the houses lovingly occupied, families living in tolerant accord, and the crazy system of never-used underground tunnels. A little girl had fled the town into the woods when the world ended, scrubbing along for weeks before she stumbled upon me and Plato; thin, dirty, and unable to remember even her name.

Now my dog Plato leaned up against the girl, who had named herself Folly, as if to support her, as we three stood in the middle of the road gazing at tidy home after tidy home, waiting for her to move or speak. She'd agreed to come and I'd explained that it might be tough. It was tough for me and Plato to search for my parents and sisters. But strangely, the only way we could have survived was to realize that we were completely alone. My parents were not going to bail me out. My sisters no longer existed.

Finally, Folly said, "Do you see anyone?"



"No Folly, I don't." It was probable she didn't trust her own eyes. "Which way is your house?"

"They look alike," said Folly.

"What colour was your house?" I prompted.

"Yellow," said Folly. Well, that narrowed it down to about two hundred.

"What else do you remember?"

"The horses," said Folly. She knelt down and wrapped her arms around Plato's neck. He bore the hug with great fortitude and patience.

Folly then closed her eyes. "Can we go



now?”

“Back to the motel?”

Folly nodded, eyes still tightly shut.
“Don’t make me look,” she said.

So Plato and I guided her back to the red Jag, and she sat in the back while Plato took the passenger seat beside me. I drove straight ahead instead of turning around and going back the way we’d come. Folly had her eyes closed, but I wanted a bit of a look around.

That’s when I saw a body on the porch of a two storey, neo-Victorian house, not far from the domed library. At least it looked like a body, slumped in a rocking chair, as still and frozen in time as everything else in Chandler’s Folly. I coasted the Jag to a stop. Plato

and I had already travelled half-way across the country, and the only body, living or dead, we’d encountered was Folly’s.

Plato saw the body too— hard to tell if it was a man or a woman— and whimpered softly. I glanced at Folly, who was tense and stiff, her hands now covering her eyes as back-up protection.

“Folly,” I said, “I’m gonna go drop you off at the Best Western. Could you find some soup and bread for dinner?”

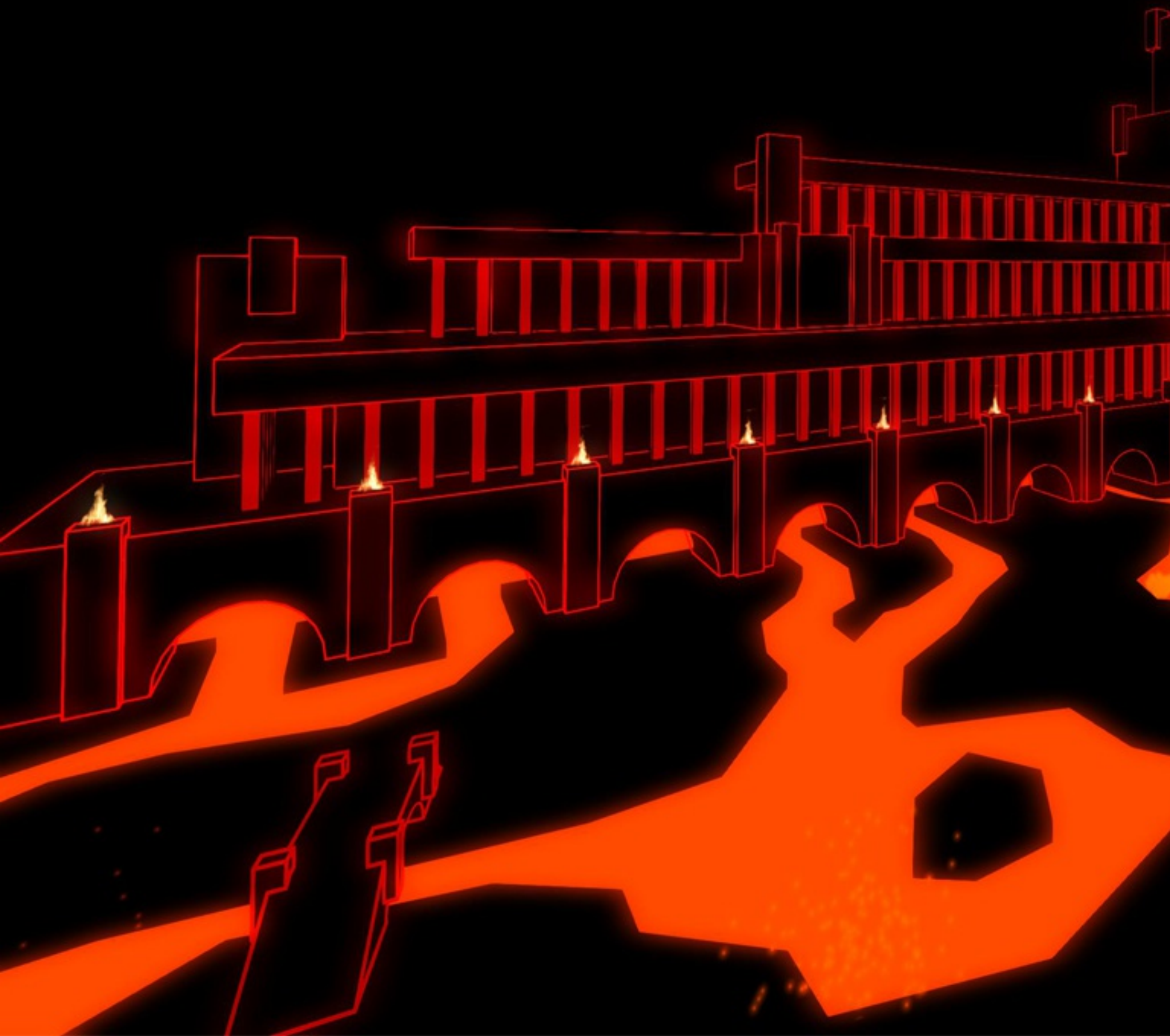
She said, “Yes. Are we gone?”

“Not yet,” I said.

· r — e — z ·

The Anthropic of Gem Preiz

by Art Blue



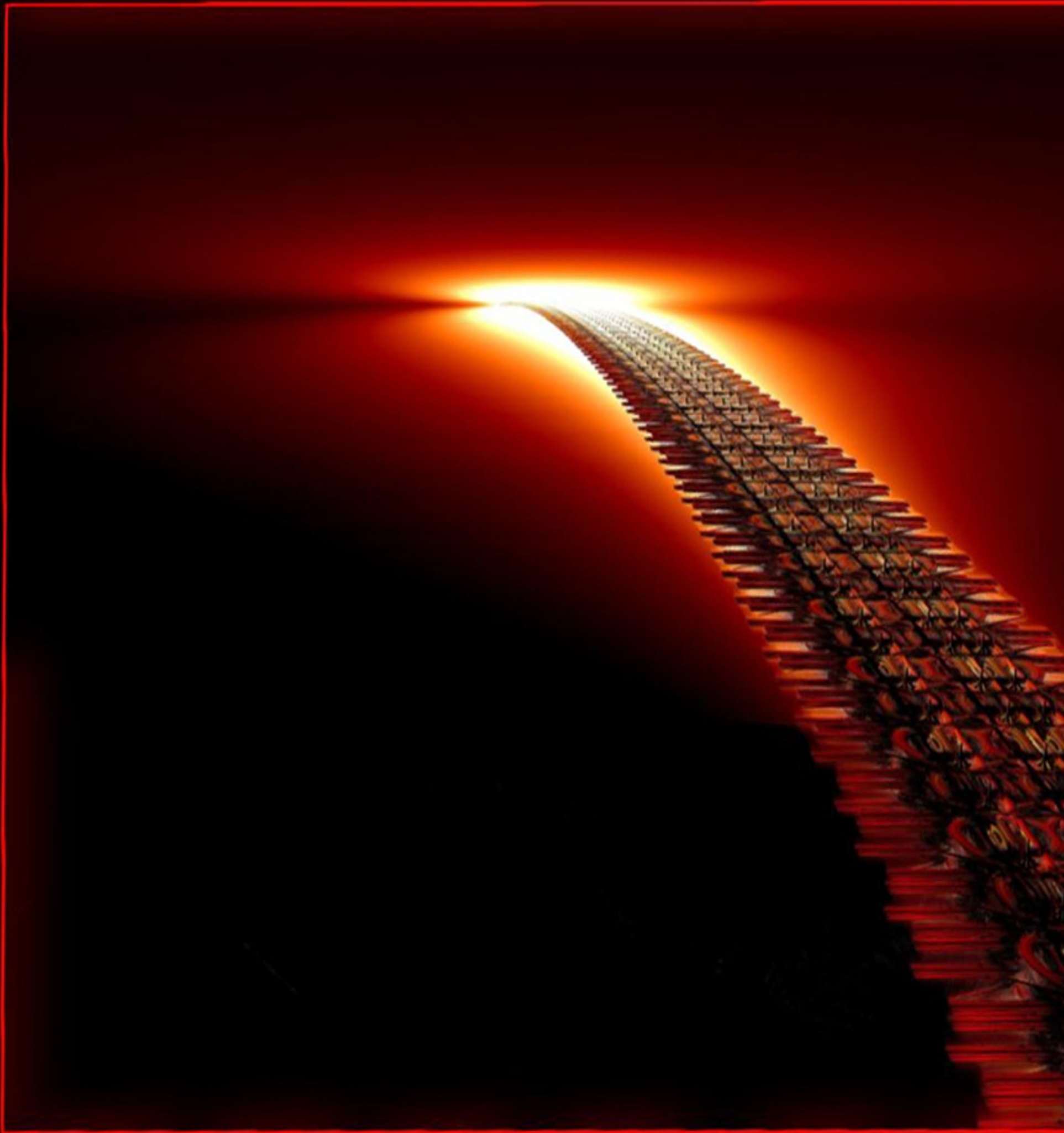
Principle



image by Gem Priez

In the course of my research on the history of the faiths, from the origin of humanity until the 22nd

Century, one of my colleagues spoke to me about the strange history of a man claiming to be certain that hell and



paradise existed, as he pretended to have visited them both, which certainly did excite my curiosity. Thanks to his

indications, I eventually found the track of the guy, interned in a mental home, apparently not dangerous, but definitely subject to delirious hallucinations. I was allowed to interview him in his room, and here is the transcription of what he told me:

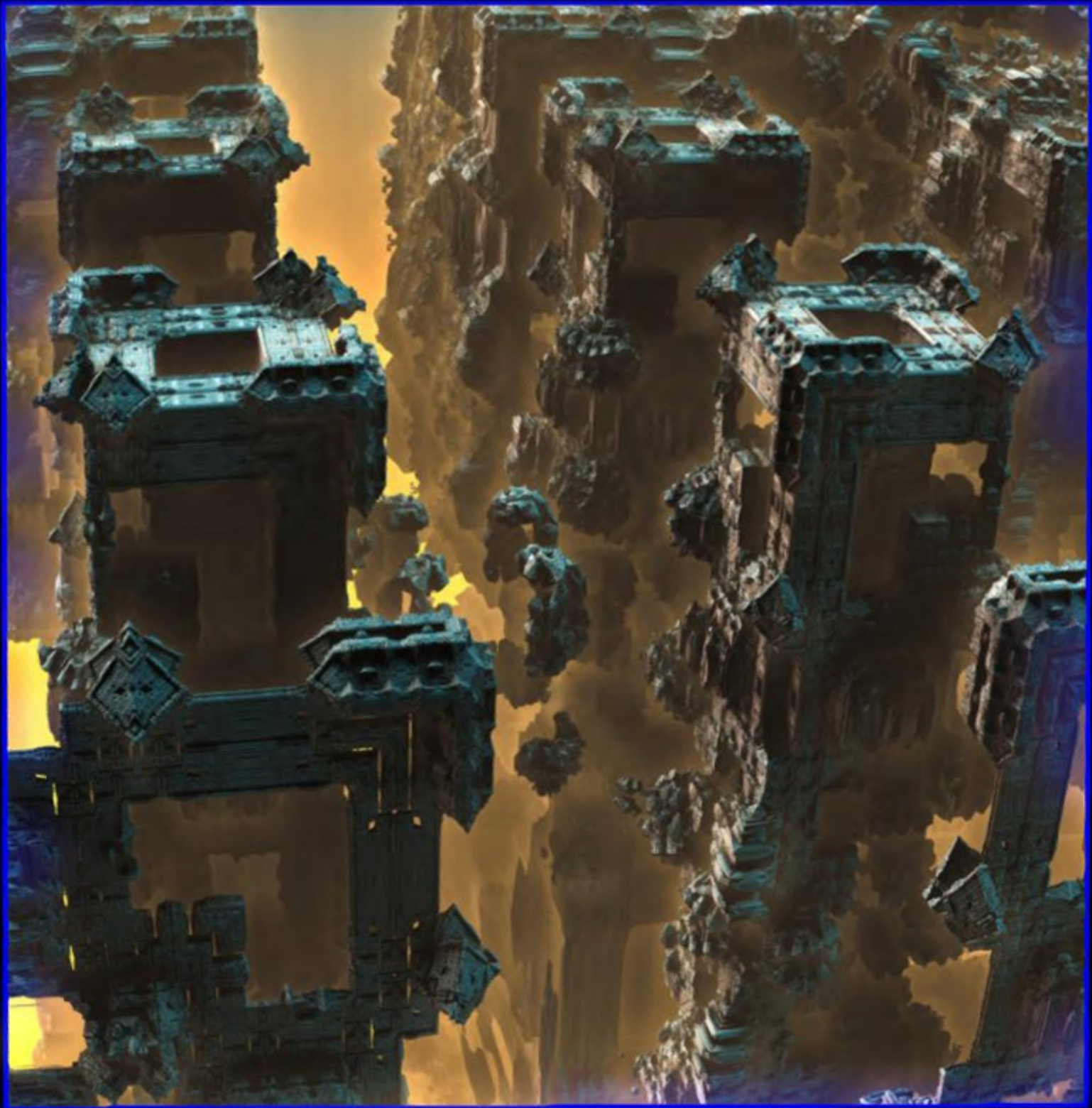
"My name is Gem. I was born on October 20, 2118, arose from unknown biological father. I met my father by adoption only at the age of 13. He was an astronaut who spent almost half of his life in space, and is the one who gave me my taste for stars.

I was a crew member of the exploratory expedition towards Trap-1/f (the closest Earth-like exoplanet, discovered more than a century ago), which was made possible since we mastered nuclear fusion and reached faster-than-light speeds.

Nobody wanted to believe in my discoveries. ..."







After I found this text on my time travels to the future, I, Art Blue, went to a place named LEA16 and took some pictures. I managed, thanks to my embedded A.I., the owl Neruval, to set the server, as indeed LEA16 is a server, on a temporary hold. The hold

will end at June 30, 2017. Then the time will be back to normal where the world is located, so around about the year 2275.

· r — e — z ·



image by booksdust

Pretty Pictures Mario Zecca

I will draw some pretty pictures
a house on the horizon
and we wind up
stick figures lined up
flowers around us

a wistful child draws with her crayons
she's in a seance
her disappearance
shocks her parents

Her name could be Gail
it could be Debbie
her name of no consequence

Her life is a trapeze act
so she goes out into the world
a liberated independent girl

but the world can be savage
it takes luck it takes courage

She gets a little depressed
starts cutting her wrists
and on a really bad day
shotgun head blown away

Don't be so critical
filled with hate ridicule
after all we are fools
deluded tools
be more like a buddha
get cooler and cooler

Follow your muse
or your bliss or whatever
just do it now
cause you won't live forever

Let's peruse the stats
get information that
blows the roof off
everything but the truth

Am I amounting to much
using rhyme as a crutch
lost memories
question reality
what's in it for me
am I really free

we look around and we judge
we process too much
we hurry up and it's such
a stress that we get touchy
and we finally erupt
can't clean this mess up

so I will draw some pretty pictures
house on the horizon
and we wind up
stick figures lined up
flowers around us



Footfalls Echo:
7. Talking
by Drover Mahogany



photo by tvurk

“There is only one rule for being a good talker — learn to listen.”
— Christopher Morley

During my daily mountain rambles my interior monologue often turns to Second Life. I am constantly amazed by how deeply SL has entrenched itself in my life. What makes this virtual environment feel so real, particularly as it's an environment in which “feel” is itself necessarily a metaphor?

I friended a fellow aussie a couple of years ago. That has been a rare event for me on SL - most of my friends are North American, reflecting the complexion of the SL population. After I came back from a break, we resumed our easy conversational friendship. She set me back on my heels with the following discourse on SL communication (layout is hers):

*“I took the plunge...
into a virtual world..Is it really just a
computer based simulated environment
populated by many users who can
create a personal avatar and
simultaneously and independently
explore and participate in activities
and communicate with others?
Seems like a tame description..
that description of a virtual world was
from wiki..*

*Isn't it much more than that?
Although....
I think the key is the last 3 words
"communicate with others"
I think that is the key..
the rest of the description sounds
somewhat clinical..
but yes, "communication"
being heard
and reciprocating
and being heard, meaning being
understood..
to listen
and be listened to
and for periods of silence to be ok..
it is ok to pause
it is ok to just sit
it is ok just to mull things over
and not feel compelled to type
to keep 'a momentum up'.”*

Her final riff here on communication really made me think. Her very direct but so thoughtful dissection of what communication means to her. The line-by-line layout of her thought process (her mode of talking on SL). What was I hearing but not fully articulating to myself in this conversation and others with her like it? After wrestling with this question, I wrote the following tanka trilogy and sent it to her the next

day, prefaced with the observation that
"all on their own, those words of yours
resonate with such powerful truth I
hear the real you speaking inside my
head. How did you do that?"

Tanka trilogy for R__

*night's approach steals up
mind reviews her clarity
sleep now comfort gives
dreams of her words revisit
there focus her vividly*

*sharp surprise overturns
what was not there now distills
calls perspective fresh
she spoke her words truth evinced
as though her life marked her thus*

*I would know her all
but know too I never will
what fascination
mind to mind domain surreal
spreads this unforeseen delight*

Drover Mahogany
(5 June 2016)

The final couplet of the 2nd tanka was
very hard won but encapsulated what
her words had made me feel so deeply.
Later her own words came back to me
in explanation:

*"but yeah words are powerful tools
which I know I treasure...
perhaps that is in part because of my*

*hearing loss
and I can see the words
and not have to hear them...
but ironically, I do hear them
and perhaps more than most...
for understanding is hearing...
and that,
I think I have...
but I don't know...
I just know I love words
I love what they are
I love what they do
I love what they say
I even love what they don't say
such as 'reading between the lines'
provided it is interpreted correctly..."*

I would have come to Second Life for
these exchanges alone! For me, the
declaration "I talk, therefore I am"
captures the essence of feeling real on
SL. That of course is "talking" in the
two-way sense of conversing
authentically with others, not only
"speaking" with written words (when
not voicing) but also "listening" to
written words. One without the other
does not suffice: turning its first letter
upside down, "Me" must be
metamorphosed through talking into
"We." And in the echoes of these
footfalls from my mountain rambles
am I not talking with myself, and now
with you, to make myself real?

· r — e — z ·

The One That Declined to Get Away



by Flynt Firebrand

An anticipatory smile drawing your lips,
you reeled in the catch,
hardly any fight in the line,
pulled the hapless thing shimmering and gasping,
from its comfortable sea -
only, disappointed, to judge it too small,
cast it back from your careful hand,
told it to grow to fit your fry pan.

That's where the metaphor broke down,
right after the first stanza there -
I mean after all, wouldn't a fish have swum
far and fast, terrified of what it had escaped?
Or maybe hidden deep in the wet darkness,
safe forever from your appetite?

But the girl didn't do that.
Perhaps she fought against the poem's conceit,
as others would have fought the hook -
writhing to free herself from the story,
not feeling herself in the form of a fish.

Perhaps she saw herself braiding nets,
ready to seize the other side of this verse,
preparing her own fire
for a slow simmer.

Or, perhaps, she took your advice,
grew up past the fisherman's device,
and casts that shadow looming,
from something sinuous and hungry,
that rises from the water now
behind you.

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